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ABSTRACT

In 1980, a project was conducted in Carteret County to: (1) establish linkages among human service delivery agencies, educational institutions, and employment and training programs; (2) use these linkages to facilitate the identification of disadvantaged and handicapped individuals who could benefit from vocational training; and (3) contact area business and industry to identify skill shortage areas and develop job opportunities for training program participants. The project's objectives were accomplished by the project staff and the Carteret County Employment and Training Interagency Committee, composed of representatives from various local and state governmental, social service, and employment agencies. The Committee identified displaced homemakers, single parents, public assistance recipients, veterans, offenders, and the handicapped as priority target groups, and provided outreach and referrals into training programs. Existing data sources, and contacts with business and industry revealed that immediate employment and training opportunities existed for general maintenance and diesel mechanics, bookkeepers, nurses and nurses' aides, medical secretaries, cashiers, and quantity cooks. Employers also expressed support for programs that would improve the basic skills of job applicants. While the project did not actually enroll participants, many economically disadvantaged individuals benefitted from the increased agency coordination and Committee referrals. (DAB)

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GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL GRANT
ANNUAL STATUS REPORT

Coordination and Linkage with Education, Social, and Welfare Agencies in Carteret County

Project Operator:
Carteret Technical College
Morehead City, North Carolina

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November 20, 1980

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GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL GRANT
ANNUAL STATUS REPORT

Date: 11-20-80

Project Name: Coordination and Linkage with Education, Social, and Welfare Agencies in Carteret County.

Contract No. 0-3495-6032

Contract Begining and Ending Dates: 04-01-80 - 09-30-80

Project Operator: Carteret Technical College
Contact: Carrol Jones
Address: 3505 Arendell Street, Morehead City, N.C.
Telephone: (919) 726-2811

Project Goals and Objectives: See narrative.

Target Groups: N/A

Service Area: Carteret County

Total Number of Participants: None

Narrative Summary

(1) Give a complete description of this Special Grant project, including staff and activities involved in the program.

The overall purpose of the project was to establish linkages with agencies in Carteret County responsible for serving disadvantaged adults in terms of providing job skills training.

Specific objectives to be achieved were: 1. To establish linkages with human service delivery agencies, educational institutions, and employment and training program operators in Carteret County. 2. To use these linkages to facilitate the identification of high school dropouts, unemployed and underemployed adults, and other disadvantaged and handicapped individuals who could benefit from vocational training. 3. To contact area business and industry to identify skill shortage areas and develop job opportunities for clients served by training programs.

In addition to these three objectives set forth for the project, two additional objectives were listed to be pursued as a follow-up project which would serve to achieve the concept of the original grant. These objectives would be 4. To provide occupational training programs to meet the employment needs identified through contacts with local business and industry. 5. To provide job placement for clients completing the programs.

Project staff consisted of a full-time project director and a half-time project secretary. The project director was responsible for the establishment of the aforementioned linkages, the identification of the target groups, and the identification of skill shortage areas and employment opportunities in the county.

To develop an ongoing dialogue rather than simple contact between the agencies, it was envisioned that an inter-agency committee be established to increase coordination and effectiveness of all employment and training programs in Carteret County.

(2) Describe the accomplishments of this project and the goals and objectives which were achieved.

In the opinion of project staff, and from the feedback from participating agencies, the linkage project has been a great success. All of the goals and objectives set forth have been achieved, but the accomplishments for the project extend well beyond these initial objectives, both in areas of measurable achievements and in the spirit of cooperation and coordination that continues to grow between participating agencies.

The initial work undertaken by project staff was the development of linkages between human service agencies, educational institutions, and employment and training program operators in Carteret County. Without exception, agency representatives expressed a need for coordination and a willingness to give their time and expertise to bring this about. As a result of a series of discussions and planning meetings held over a period of three months, the Carteret County Employment and Training Interagency Committee was established on August 4, 1980.

The Committee meets once a month at the College and has already made many contributions toward improving employment and training opportunities in the county for our economically disadvantaged residents.

Two major decisions were made by the Committee that go beyond the original goals of the grant. In order to be most effective, the Committee felt the need to coordinate at the regional and state level in addition to the county level, which was accomplished in part by expanding our membership to include representatives from agencies on these levels. Secondly, the committee felt that to have as strong an impact as possible on employment and training programs as possible in the County we would address ourselves to all employment and training programs in the County instead of exclusively focusing on CETA funded programs.

The Committee has been working in many different areas including seeking an in-depth knowledge of each agencies programs and resources, increased visibility and support for each agencies programs in the County, a coordinated approach toward working with county business and industry in job development, and a effective system of referrals for clients between agencies. Examples of referals measurable at the College level would be the increased number of agency clients who are high school dropouts and are enrolling in Adult Basic Education, GED, and Adult High School Programs at Carteret Technical College, and the establishment of special vocational and basic educational classes for county PSE participants.

There has also been some discussion of using the Committee as a planning body for manpower funds targeted for the County.

Agencies represented on the Committee include the Employment Security Commission, the Neuse Mental Health Center, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, Carteret County Veteran's Office, Vocational Rehabilitation, Veteran's Office-CTC, Family Service/ Information Center-Cherry Point Air Station, Carteret County Department of Social Services, Carteret County CETA Office, Carteret Community Action, N.C. Department of Labor, N.C. Adult Probation/ Parole, Carteret County Board of Education CETA Office, Carteret County Council on the Status of Women, Carteret County Schools Vocational Office, Station Club(Sheltered Workshop), Beacon House, and the Neuse River Council of Governments.

The Committee is increasingly a viable and dynamic organization of which we are justifiably proud.

The second objective of the project, the identification of economically disadvantaged individuals who could benefit from occupational training programs was modified somewhat as the project progressed. The original intent was to compile a list of prospective clients who needed job skils training. However this approach did not seem to be the most effective way of addressing this objective for a number of reasons. Since the disadvantaged population is in a constant state of change regarding eligibility for CETA, a list would probably be outdated in a matter of weeks, and several participating agencies felt that such a list would be a violation of the Privacy Act.

A far better solution seemed to be to: 1. Focus in on what target groups in the County were most in need of job skills training and 2. to use the Interagency Committee to provide outreach and referrals into training programs at the point of intake. The first step in the process was undertaken at the regional level through discussions with the Manpower Planning Office of the Neuse River Council of Governments and the participation in meetings of and the review of studies done by the Regional Employment and Training Advisory Committee, (RETAC). After an awareness of regional target groups had been acheived, we then attempted to focus on those groups most prevalent in our County through human service delivery agencies and employment and training program operators on the Interagency Committee. Priority target goups that we have identified are displaced homemakers, single parents, public assistance recipients, veterans,offenders, and the handicapped.

The effectiveness of using the Interagency Committee for outreach and recruitment was graphically demonstrated when during the month of September, when intake-eligibility staff for the College's class-size cashiers training project successfully used referrals from member agencies to fill the openings for the project with target group memebers.

The third major objective of the project was contact with area business and industry. It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of this objective. Project staff felt that this would be the key to the success of future vocational training programs. What we hoped to accomplish was 1. an identification of skill shortage areas in Carteret County 2. An ongoing dialogue with county business and industry. 3. Meaningful employer input into the design and implementation of any training program, and a committment for job placement at the completion of training.

We began our attempt to identify County skill shortage areas with a preliminary analysis and projection of the regional and county labor market by using research and studies done by the Bureau of Employment Security Research, the Manpower Planning Office of the NRCOG, the skill shortage areas identified by the RETAC, and the Five Year Business and Industry Needs Survey of Carteret County prepared by the faculty and staff of Carteret Technical College. The second step was a discussion of local business and industry needs with officials of the Carteret County Chamber of Commerce, The Economic Development Council, and local Trade Associations. Thirdly and most importantly we then began a survey of individual employers seeking not only their present and future needs forskilled employees but a firm commitment to participate in whatever training program that may be developed. Major areas identified as skill shortage areas where there was an immediate need of fifteen or more employees and a firm committment to participate in vocational training included the following: General Maintainence mechanics, Bookeepers, LPN's, Diesel mechanics, Medical Secretaries, Cashiers, Nurse's Aids and Quantity cooks. Survey results are on file at the CETA office at Carteret Technical College and are available to any interested agency.

An unexpected result of employer contacts was a strong expression on their part that job applicants lacked the basic math, verbal, and interpersonal skills they sought in a new employee, and their willingness to participate in a project to correct this deficiency. As a result of these discussions, project staff developed a model project designed to address these concerns, as a joint effort by the Interagency Committee, Carteret Technical College, and county employers. A committment was obtained from the Committee membership, the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Commission, and all major county employers such as Blue Bell, Conner Mobile Homes, Atlantic Veneer, Carteret Manufacturing and many others.

Unfortunately, due to extreme competition for available funds, we were not able to initiate this project, but are still in the process of seeking alternative funding sources because of the support that the proposal has generated.

(3) List goals and objectives not accomplished.

As was previously stated, all of the goals and objectives of the grant were accomplished. In retrospect, project staff would have liked more time to pursue funding sources for vocational training programs in areas identified as skill shortage areas in Carteret County. We feel we have accomplished much in five short months, but feel somewhat frustrated with the apparent lack of funding to continue in the establishment of vocational training programs.

(4) Describe technical or other assistance required to operate the project.

The ETC and DET staff have been a tremendous help in operating the project, especially in the technical assistance given to our staff who were not familiar with many reporting requirements necessary in the operation of the project. Project staff are grateful for the advise, support, and encouragement given us by Susan Gerlach and Susan Train of the ETC Office.

(5) Describe coordination between this and other employment and training programs in the jurisdiction and the State.

The coordination between this project and other employment and training programs has perhaps been the highlight of the project and has been well covered earlier in this report.

(6) Give an overall evaluation of the project.

Project staff and participating agencies feel that the project has been a resounding success. Human service delivery agencies, educational institutions, employment and training program operators and county business and industry are coordinating their efforts in the field of employment and training and there have been visible results. Moreover coordination has also increased on the regional and state levels as well. We have a viable and dynamic Interagency Committee that did not previously exist. We have a much better understanding of the characteristics of the CETA eligible population in Carteret County, and their needs, and the vocational training areas where their chances of permanent unsubsidized employment would be optimal. Although no participants were directly enrolled in the project, many economically disadvantaged residents of the county directly benefited from the project through increased coordination between county agencies and as a result of referrals made by Committee members.

(7) Suggestions/comments for other sponsors of a similar project.

We would recommend any program operator with an opportunity to initiate a similar project to do so because of the positive results of our efforts.

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